

## Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Alexander Melville Bell, September 19, 1880, with transcript

Letter written by Alexander Graham Bell to his Father. Steamship Herder, Sunday night — September 19th, 1880. Dear Papa:

Your note of the 4th inst., was handed to me on board the Steamer by Mr. Tainter just as we were starting. Thanks for the statement which I will note. Capital invested \$1200. Interest with balance on hand due January 10th, 1881 — \$96.03

We have just sighted the Light-house on the Scilly Isles — so we know we shall reach Plymouth tomorrow morning between 8 and 9 o'clock — so I take the opportunity of writing a few lines tonight although my hand is so cramped with cold that I can hardly write. Mabel is in bed and fast asleep but I intend staying up to see the rockets fired that will announce to Europe the arrival of the Herder.

We have had quite a stormy passage but after the first two days nobody suffered. It has been so foggy lately that no observations have been taken for three days — and the Captain of course has been anxious to sight the light to verify his position. His dead reckoning proved so correct that we sighted the light at the very time he said we would and found ourselves heading directly for it!

We expect to reach Cherbourg tomorrow evening and I will cable to you from there.

I cannot give you any address yet — but letters directed to the care of Barings Brothers, London — will be sure to be forwarded to us. Please keep a look out on Scientific Periodicals for any notices of the Photophone. Order from your bookseller — the October number of the American Journal of Science and Art (Silliman's Journal) I expect my paper will appear there in full.

## Library of Congress

Look out also for the October number of the Popular Science Monthly. I expect also there will be notices in the Scientific American — or the Scientific American Supplement.

I have occupied my time during the last few days in making another copy of my article for publication in England — or for publication in France. Mabel will have told you how few passengers there are on board — only two other 1st cabin passengers besides ourselves! However we have had a very enjoyable time.

I have secured a very nice house in Washington for one year from the 1st of November. It is next to the British Minister and quite close to our lot. I ran down to Washington for a day to settle up matters there. Collected all our things into one room of the house — and Mr. Tainter will have them removed when he goes to Washington.

Hear a movement on deck which indicates “look out for rockets.” So good by all.

With much love to Mama, Mary, Lizzie, Louisa and all.

Your affectionate son, Alec. Prof. A. M. Bell, Brantford, Ont., Canada.